

## ELOPING MINISTER AND GIRL LOCATED

Rev. Jere K. Cooke and  
Floretta Whaley Liv-  
ing Under Aliases.

## PREACHER TELLS STORY OF FLIGHT

Claims That Wife Married Him  
Merely for Social Position, and  
That He Chose Love and  
Wanderer's Life In-  
stead—Couple  
Disappear.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., December 30.—In a pelling narrative before daybreak, the Rev. Jere Knobe Cooke, formerly pastor of the fashionable St. George's Church, at Hempstead, L. I., and Floretta Whaley, the seventeen-year-old heiress, with whom he eloped eight months ago, deserting a wife to whom he had been married for nine years, stole away to-day from the little flat which they had occupied at No. 119 Green Street, in this city, where they were discovered yesterday living under the name of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Balcom, taking with them their baby boy, Balcom, born two months ago. They left behind all they had saved during the eight months that search for them had been made throughout the country. The police declare that no effort is being made to locate them, or to apprehend the couple. The discovery was made through the fact that Captain Cleary, of the Morse Patrol Agency, who had met them as Mr. and Mrs. Balcom when they arrived here last June from Los Angeles, recognized the girl, published last week in connection with a dispatch from Louisiana, stating that Cooke had deserted Floretta Whaley and had "given her away to a family there who were educating her."

Not Afraid of Prison.  
Yesterday afternoon, to a representative from a local newspaper, Cooke admitted his identity, and asked the reporter to lower his tone so that the girl in the next room might not learn of the discovery of their identity. "My God, what an awakening to our happiness!" exclaimed Cooke. "All I want is a chance to get away. I don't mind Sing Sing or hell, but it is she. The child was born two months ago, and discovery and apprehension would back and forth. Cooke told the reporter the story of his life and of his elopement with Miss Whaley. "The inexorable law must be maintained," he said. "I have preached it often. You know it. There is nothing that will paint a black sheep white. But I have my reasons. For ten years I have kept silent. For the last eight months I have borne without a murmur all the abuse, the vilification that newspapers could concoct."

Was Self-Made Man.  
Cooke's father died when he was five years old. He was adopted by an uncle and learned the trade of a paper-hanger and decorator. He worked his way through Yale and finally entered the ministry. Since his disappearance he has been working as a painter and any other work he could get.

Cooke told of his marriage and of his unhappiness after that time. He declared that his wife admitted to him that she had married for no other reason than to know him. On the one hand was a loveless life, with honor and position and wealth, and on the other love and poverty. I chose this. He pointed to the scantily furnished room. "I do praise myself for the step I took. It was weakness. It was unmanly. But I am only human, and as I am to be judged by human beings, it is but right that they shall know that I gave up all that I could have had. Now all I ask is to be let alone."

Begs to Be Let Alone.  
"I am doing a man's work. I have sinned; but I have suffered. Now I beg the world to let me alone with my wife and child. I can live the life of a good citizen. They say I am a good decorator."

"I was kept at work long after the other men were let go during the financial straits. I ask the world to let me be a painter, nothing more, to do a man's work and enjoy the average society and happiness of the average man."

The only identification established so far of Gerald Balcom as the Rev. Jere Knobe Cooke, is his own admission. Cooke said he was afflicted with heart failure, and several times he was on the verge of collapse during the interview. On the promise that "The Times-Dispatch" would not be apprised of the fact that their identity had been discovered, Cooke accompanied the reporter to a newspaper to be sketched. On the way downtown Cooke fainted on the street.

Cooke's neighbors speak in the highest terms of the pair and of Cooke's devotion to his supposed wife, Mrs. S. M. Miles, who lives in an adjoining apartment, said that she saw Cooke and his companion, or Mr. and Mrs. Balcom, as he knew them, leave their flat early this morning and go out in the storm. The man had a few pieces of baggage, and the girl carried the baby closely wrapped. All efforts to find them to-day were in vain.

Still Welcome at Home.  
MINEOLA, L. I., December 30.—District Attorney Coles said to-day that he had received no official information that Jere K. Cooke and Floretta Whaley have been found in San Francisco. As soon as he did so Mr. Coles said he would request the San Francisco authorities to arrest Cooke on a warrant that was issued soon after his disappearance. Cooke is charged with abduction. Mrs. Whaley, grandmother of Floretta Whaley, said she hoped the girl had been found, and that she would welcome her if it were to return to her home. If necessary, Mrs. Whaley said, she would send money for her granddaughter to return.

## SHOOTING YOUNG BOY TWICE

Drinking Man Seriously Wounded and  
Creates Excitement.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)  
CHRISTIANSBURG, VA., December 30.—While on a protracted drunken spree Richard Walnwright, a young white man of this place, shot and dangerously wounded Robert Correll, a white boy of fourteen years, twice in the leg, the result of which may be quite serious in the opinion of the attending physicians.

Walnwright had been very drunk all day, and at night he tried to borrow a pistol from a number of persons, saying there were too many local officers here, and he intended to thin them out, and he finally procured one from a man named Hudkins, law telephone central office, and proceeded out to take the town.

Young Correll was the first one he met, and he opened fire upon him, wounding him in the leg in front of the window of his father's place. Walnwright raised the blind and inquired what the trouble meant. Walnwright pointed the weapon at his son and remarked that the next shot was for him, whereupon the boy fled for his life. But before he could return Walnwright shot Correll again in almost the same spot as the first wound, and proceeded to the hotel and ran out the proprietor before Deputy Sheriff Rogers could arrive and arrest him.

Services were in progress at the churches at the time, but when the news of the shooting spread all the men left the churches for the scene of the shooting.

Walnwright was lodged in jail, and has been refused bail by Mayor and Justice W. C. Flagg, who committed him to await the result of Correll's wounds. Walnwright's attorney will probably apply to Judge W. W. Moffett for bail to-morrow.

Prohibition Law Valid  
Georgia Has Made Preparation for Any  
Revenue Defect.

ATLANTA, December 30.—Speaking of the effort on the part of the liquor interests to have the prohibition law declared unconstitutional, Governor Hoke Smith said:

"There is nothing in the effort to attack the law on account of the provision of the Constitution appropriating special revenue to the State, in connection with a dispatch from Louisiana, stating that Cooke had deserted Floretta Whaley and had 'given her away to a family there who were educating her.'"

SERMONS CREATE A STIR  
Preaching Sermon at Christmas  
Conditions in Winchester.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)  
WINCHESTER, VA., December 30.—Vice and defiance of law and order in general in Winchester were condemned from several pulpits last night by local pastors, which has resulted in a more peaceful and law-abiding community. The Methodist Church Rev. J. W. Beale declared his willingness to make affidavit that during the two days prior to Christmas he saw no record of intoxication, profanity and general unseemly conduct on the streets, and during his four years' residence in the city of Winchester. He also scored the city government.

Rev. D. H. Kern, at Braddock Street Methodist Church, gave the Supreme members a severe arraignment for spending their money on public amusements and night frolics, and then declining to support their church.

HELD SANE MAN FOR YEARS  
Ed. Byers, Confined in Madhouse Thir-  
teen Years.

CHEYENNE, WYO., December 30.—The State Supreme Court has ordered the release of Ed. Byers, who has for thirteen years been an inmate of the State Insane Asylum.

The order is the outcome of a long fight made in Byers' behalf by E. T. Payton, of Arapahoe, Wyo., who became acquainted with Byers while the latter was confined in the asylum. Payton became convinced that Byers was sane, and that his detention was therefore illegal.

Payton lost his case in the District Court, but he carried it to the Supreme Court, where Byers produced before him for personal examination by the judges. Byers convinced them of his sanity.

YOUNG WIFE A SUICIDE  
Mrs. Gearheart Ends Life by Firing  
Bullet in Her Breast.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)  
NEWPORT NEWS, VA., December 30.—With a gaping bullet wound in her right breast, Mrs. Gearheart was found in a dying condition by her husband this morning in the dining-room of their home in Chesapeake. The woman died without making a statement, and before medical aid could reach her. Gearheart was at work in his office next door to the home when he heard the shot, and rushed to his house to find that his wife had killed herself.

No reason for the suicide can be assigned. Mrs. Gearheart was twenty-two years old, and had been married only two years. She had been happy and cheerful during the holidays, and as a result of her husband had nothing to make her life unhappy.

CHIEF DRIVES OVER BOY  
May Cause Lad's Death, Which  
Accident Occurs in Charlotte, Which

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)  
CHARLOTTE, N. C., December 30.—Two cottages were destroyed and a third badly damaged by fire this evening in the southern section of the city. The loss will reach several thousand dollars.

While driving at a furious pace to the fire down South Church Street, the buggy of Chief Orr, of the fire department, ran over Charles Pace, a small white lad, seriously, perhaps fatally, injuring him. The lad's head was badly cut and his skull may be fractured.

The Check Came Back.  
STANTON, VA., December 30.—S. R. Love, who has been buying rows for a Philadelphia house through the holidays and shipping quite a quantity, gave H. G. McGary a check on a Philadelphia bank for \$117.79, which came back unpaid. McGary swore out a warrant to-day and had him arrested. He gave bond in \$1,000. The case will be heard today.

## DRUCE MYSTERY IS FINALLY CLEARED

Opened Grave Discloses  
Body of Man and Dis-  
credits Caldwell.

## EXPLODES STORY OF DOUBLE LIFE

Caldwell and Other Witnesses  
Testified in Behalf of Claimant  
of Large Estate That the  
Coffin Contained Lead  
Instead of  
Body.

LONDON, December 30.—The body of Thomas Charles Druce, in Highgate Cemetery, was exhumed this morning, just forty-three years to a day after his burial. The coffin was found to contain the remains of a human body, thus exploding the romantic tale told by Robert C. Caldwell and others during the recent hearing of the Druce perjury case, that it contained a roll of lead. The official statement given out by the Home Office and others officially present at the exhumation seems effectively to prove that the body buried in 1864 was actually that of T. C. Druce. The authorized statement follows:

"The coffin was opened and found to contain the body of an aged, bearded man; the plate on the coffin bore the name, Thomas Charles Druce. The scene at Highgate Cemetery this morning when the vault was opened was remarkable. All the entrances to the cemetery were surrounded by cordons of police. Only those persons who had passes from the Home Office were admitted to the cemetery. George Hollamby Druce, who claims he is the rightful heir to the Portland Dukedom and to its estates, tried unsuccessfully twice to get into the cemetery.

All Doubt Dispelled.  
The operations began at daylight with the removal of the top of the coffin in the vault, containing the bodies of the wife and a son of T. C. Druce. It was nearly 11:30 o'clock before the coffin was brought ready for opening and inspection. The top was quickly removed, and the body of the man was taken out. The body was found to be that of the eminent surgeon, Augustus J. Pepper, to assure all present that human remains lay in the coffin.

The Druce vault was thus given up to the earth after ten years of legal proceedings, which have cost a considerable fortune. A large part of this money was obtained from servant girls and other workers, who were induced to buy shares in a company formed to prosecute the claims of George Hollamby Druce against the estate of the Duke of Portland. The charge of perjury against Herbert Druce is effectively disposed of, and those persons who have sworn to the placing of lead instead of a human body in the coffin have been discredited.

Caldwell Perjury Charge.  
NEW YORK, December 30.—Robert C. Caldwell, whose testimony as a witness in the Druce case led to the reopening of the grave of T. C. Druce, is now at the home of his daughter at New Brighton, Staten Island. He is under \$5,000 bonds to appear in court to-morrow.

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Caldwell's story was to the effect that the Duke of Portland and T. C. Druce, a London corkcutter, were one and the same. He had known the Duke of Portland under both names, he said, and at the request of the duke had arranged a private funeral for him. Caldwell's story was to the effect that the Duke of Portland and T. C. Druce, a London corkcutter, were one and the same. He had known the Duke of Portland under both names, he said, and at the request of the duke had arranged a private funeral for him.

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## SEVERE STORM ON COAST

High Wind Raging and Much Damage  
to Shipping in the Sound.

NORFOLK, VA., December 30.—A fierce storm is raging in Norfolk and over the Atlantic coast of Virginia and North Carolina to-night. The city is in a state of alarm, and considerable minor damage has been done to property. Several large plate-glass windows were smashed. The wind is blowing forty miles an hour in the city and fifty on the coast. The wires to Cape Henry, and the life-saving stations are all down, and conditions along the coast cannot be learned definitely. It is feared that damage has been done to shipping interests. On Main street, the gas pipes have been broken, and the streets are filled with debris. The entire line of the local electric and telephone companies were kept busy caring for live wires. Many of the streets were in darkness, the street lights being knocked out by crossed wires.

Gale at Newport News.  
(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)  
NEWPORT NEWS, December 30.—A stiff northeasterly gale blew here and in Hampton Roads since early this afternoon. There has been considerable damage among small boats moored along the beach, but as far as can be learned, no lives have been lost, and no accidents of consequence in this vicinity.

Wind Storm in Richmond.  
A severe wind storm passed over Richmond about 11 o'clock last night, some signs being blown down and other minor injuries reported. No serious damage was noticed by the police, however, and the storm passed almost as quickly as it came. The night continued brilliantly clear, with the thermometer rapidly falling, and with indications of colder weather this morning.

OCEAN TRAVEL'S HIGH TIDE  
Total of 2,967,325 Persons Cross At-  
lantic During Year.

NEW YORK, December 30.—Transatlantic passenger travel east and west-bound, has been greater during the year 1907 than at any time for the past four or five years. This travel for the year 1907 reached the enormous total of 2,967,325, equal to the combined population of the entire world.

The passenger movement for the year 1906, and 1,911,511 greater than for the year 1905. The total for the year 1907, however, was 2,967,325, or 1,055,814 in excess of 1906. This increase is more than offset by the eastbound movement for the year, which shows that 242,565 more steerage passengers returned to Europe during the year than in 1906.

SUED BY SISTER-IN-LAW  
Brother's Widow Accuses Man About to  
Wed of Deception.

CHICAGO, December 30.—John T. Noake, representative of the American Varnish Company, was sued for \$10,000 for breach of promise by the widow of his brother, John T. Noake, who died last year. The widow, Mrs. Noake, is now at the home of her daughter at New Brighton, Staten Island. He is under \$5,000 bonds to appear in court to-morrow.

"I am going to stop this wedding," said Mrs. Maude Noake, when she filed suit, "even if I have to appeal to the minister. John T. Noake has been at the home of his daughter at New Brighton, Staten Island. He is under \$5,000 bonds to appear in court to-morrow."

"I wrote me passionate letters and vowed he loved me. He was an experienced hand at it. Then I discovered that he was deceiving me. I engaged to a beautiful young woman."

MAXIM GORKY IS DYING  
Russian Novelist, Victim of Tubercu-  
losis, Now in France.

NEW YORK, December 30.—That Maxim Gorky is dying in France of tuberculosis is the news brought to America by Mme. Marie Petrov, who has just arrived from Russia.

Mme. Petrov, who is here to study America, is a close personal friend of Gorky. She says it is not possible for him to long survive the ravages of the disease.

Speaking of the Russian people, Mme. Petrov said:

"The people are now resting in their long struggle for liberty, but soon they will be again engaged in a new struggle. The people are now resting in their long struggle for liberty, but soon they will be again engaged in a new struggle."

Only Members of Family and Report-  
ers to Be Admitted to Thaw Trial.

NEW YORK, December 30.—All women, except members of Thaw's family and the women reporters, will be excluded from the courtroom during the second trial of Harry Thaw, under an order issued by Justice Dowling to-day. Thaw is charged with the murder of Dr. George H. Brown.

"The reason given for this order is that the seating capacity of the courtroom has been reduced greatly since the first trial, and will now accommodate only about 150 spectators. The court has determined that it was determined to prevent a recurrence of the annoyance caused at the last trial by women moved by morbid curiosity, who made use of every pretext at their command to secure admission."

TEMPEST IN A TEAPOT  
"Merchant of Venice" Cause of Secu-  
lar War in Texas.

EL PASO, TEXAS, December 30.—In consequence of the action of School Superintendent G. F. Putnam in eliminating "The Merchant of Venice" from the English course in the El Paso High School, at the request of Rabbi Martin Zeligson, of the Jewish congregation, the Ministers' Union to-day filed a vigorous protest against what they termed "sectarian interference" with the schools. The school board will meet next Monday to consider the superintendent's action.

## PRESIDENT AT HOME; ENJOYED HIS TRIP

Came to Virginia for an  
Outing and Enjoyed  
Themselves.

## DID NOT COME AFTER BIG GAME

Rest and Recreation the Object  
of the Trip to Virginia.  
Does Not Find Any  
Quail, but Kills a  
Hawk on the  
Wing.

WASHINGTON, December 30.—Looking the picture of health and with every appearance of having enjoyed his outing of five days at Pine Knot, Va., where Mrs. Roosevelt has a cottage, President Roosevelt arrived here to-night at 8:50 over the Southern Railway.

The party came in a special train, which made the run from North Garden, the railway station nearest Pine Knot, without mishap, having left there at 5:50. After assisting Mrs. Roosevelt to the platform, the President conversed a few moments with those who had gathered around his car. There were only railroad officials or the police guard detailed for the occasion. One member of the party inquired of the President if he had bagged any big game. "Oh, I did not go after any," was the quick response. "I just took the children to the country for an outing. We all enjoyed ourselves immensely." Soon afterward he was being driven to the White House, where he arrived a few minutes after 9. There it was stated that no engagements for the evening had been made.

BAGGED SOME GAME  
Got Good-Sized String of Partridges  
and Several Rabbits.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)  
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA., December 30.—President Roosevelt brought his year-end visit to his Virginia hunting lodge to a close to-day, and immediately after the luncheon the start was made for North Garden, which was reached shortly after 4 o'clock. Near the end of the journey a heavy shower came up, which caught the President and his party, and in consequence they received quite a drenching. The President and Mrs. Roosevelt and Miss Carow escaped with only a slight wetting.

A special train was once made up at North Garden, consisting of an engine, the private car "Twilight," and a combination car, and at 5:30 the start was made for Washington. Only a small crowd was gathered at the station, and there was no demonstration of any sort. The President's train was met by a crowd of Union Station to get a glimpse of the Chief Executive, but all were disappointed, as the special only slowed up, and did not come to a stop.

Sund was a day of rest and recreation. In the morning the Pine Knot household attended divine services at Christ Church, St. Ann's Parish, and listened to a sermon by the new rector, the Rev. W. H. Darby, from the second chapter of Luke, eleventh to fourteenth verses. In the afternoon the President and Surgeon-General Rixey went for a long horseback ride, while Mrs. Roosevelt and Miss Carow, accompanied by Mr. Joseph T. Miller, went to the hotel at the macadam roads of Green Mountain.

Kills Hawk on Wing.  
March weather marked the final day of the President's stay at Pine Knot. Despite the heavy drenching of rain during the night, the morning dawned with bright sunshine, and immediately after breakfast the President and Dr. Rixey went for a quail hunt in the fields around Pine Knot. Several coveys of birds were flushed by the dogs, but neither of the hunters got close enough for a shot. The President showed his good marksmanship, however, by pulling down a hawk on the wing. Authentic reports from the Pine Knot neighborhood are to the effect that the President's total of game on the present trip, in addition to the hawk winged this morning, amounted to a good-sized string of partridges and several rabbits. Not the least enjoyable of the events of the trip was the turkey hunt arranged for Kermit and his cousin, from New York, who reached Pine Knot Friday.

"Uncle Dick" chaperoned the two youthful hunters to his favorite blind on the top of Green Mountain, but nary a shot did they get.

HEAVY EARTHQUAKE SHOCK  
Sismic Disturbance Near Central  
American Very Severe.

WASHINGTON, December 30.—A very heavy earthquake was recorded on the instruments at the coast and Geodetic Survey Observatory at Chetsum, Mexico, to-day. It commenced at thirty-three minutes thirty seconds past midnight, and lasted over one hour. The weather bureau issued a bulletin relative to the earthquake, saying:

The first preliminary tremors lasted four minutes and fifty seconds, and the strongest motion occurred at 12:45 A. M., at which the actual movement of the ground at Washington was about five millimeters.

Recorded at Albany.  
ALBANY, N. Y., December 30.—Early to-day an earthquake of large proportions was recorded on the seismographs at the State Museum Station in this city. The vibrations of the needles set upon both machines were severe, those of the north-south pendulum measuring two and one-half inches in maximum amplitude. The disturbance began at 12:33 1-2 A. M., and it took an hour for it to pass through this region. The preliminary tremors lasted about eight and one-half minutes. The earthquake appears to have occurred at about 4,500 miles from Albany, with the center of the disturbance in the Atlantic region of Central or South America, or else out in the Pacific Ocean south of Mexico.

## MRS. AGNES YOUNG VICTIM

Identity of Murdered Woman at Harrison, N. J., Is Known.

NEW YORK, December 30.—Some light was thrown to-day on the mystery surrounding the death of the woman whose nude body was found last Thursday half hidden in the muddy ooze of a pond near Harrison, N. J., when Mrs. Frank Hull, of this city, went to the Newark morgue and declared positively that the dead woman was Mrs. Agnes Young, who formerly lived with her, and later with a Mrs. King, in Brooklyn. The police believe that Mrs. Hull's identification is correct. Mrs. Hull said that she went to Jersey City with Mrs. Young on Christmas Day. Following luncheon she parted with her companion, who she understood, was going on to Newark to join in a houseboat party. When Mrs. Hull returned the next morning through the newspapers, and saw that the description of the dead woman seemed to fit her friend, she informed the police that she believed that the murdered woman was Mrs. Young, who had been employed as a typewriter in a West Side Hotel. She said that Mrs. Young was the wife of an engineer, but that she had not lived with her husband for several years. Mrs. Hull said that she had never left her home in Jersey City, and that she had never seen Mrs. Young since she had left her home in Jersey City. Mrs. Young had \$300 in her purse and wore a diamond ring. On their arrival at Jersey City they were met by a man whom she named, with whom they had lunch. When Mrs. Hull returned to her home, Mrs. Hull returned to the city.

VARDAMAN IS ARBITRARY  
Governor Contends Native-Born Child  
Is Undesirable.

WASHINGTON, December 30.—Among other matters of complaint lodged with the State Department by the Italian embassy some time ago was the case of some Italian children who had been denied entrance into the State of Mississippi. The department announced to-day that Governor Vardaman, with a courteous request for an investigation and report upon the facts. The Governor's reply amounts to a declaration to admit the children on the ground that they are the legitimate issue of a man and a woman, and may properly be excluded by State officials.

Affidavits collected by State agents and accompanying the Governor's report to the effect that the children are of clearly habitable, free from disease and have been pupils in the public schools in New Orleans. It is also set out in the affidavits that these children were born in Orleans, and are consequently Americans in the same degree as any native-born citizen, and therefore, are free to travel as they will in the United States. The children were born in Orleans, and are consequently Americans in the same degree as any native-born citizen, and therefore, are free to travel as they will in the United States.

UNION VETERAN'S GIFT  
Ex-Commander of U. S. A. R. Donates  
Money to Confederates.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., December 30.—General Eli Torrance, of Minneapolis, former commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, sent \$70 to the Alabama Confederate Home, a holiday gift to the inmates. The money was sent in \$1 bills—one for each old soldier. General Torrance became interested in the home when he visited Alabama three years ago. He contributed a substantial sum to the fund for the home, and through him several G. A. R. posts also contributed.

HE DENOUNCES PRESIDENT  
Negro Bishop Calls on His Race to  
Defeat Taft.

BOSTON, MASS., Dec. 30.—Bishop Alexander, colored, of Jersey City, N. J., who has been in the city since his arrival here, severely criticized President Roosevelt and Secretary Taft for their attitude on the Brownsville, Texas, shooting. He advised all his people to "give their money, talent, and influence to the aid of the colored man or measure inimical to the best interests of the negroes."

BULLET IN HIS TEMPLE  
Bank Officer After Quarrel With His  
Wife Kills Himself.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., December 30.—With a bullet-hole in his temple the body of O. W. Wicks, bookkeeper for the People's Bank and Trust Company, was found at 10 o'clock this morning. Wicks and his wife quarreled Friday night and she left home. It is the belief of the police that Wicks killed himself Saturday morning, as the body indicated that he had been dead for more than a day. His accounts at the bank were straight.

TWO BARGES LOST AT SEA  
Captain and Crews of Both Vessels Are  
Missing.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., December 30.—Two barges, the Ida and the Jennie, bound north in tow of the tug G. J. Sanford, were lost off Point Judith to-day. The Ida sank and the Jennie was upon the breakerwater, where she soon began to go to pieces. Captain Davis, of the Ida, and his wife took to a small boat, and were landed safely after an exhausting experience. The life-saving crew rescued Captain Davis and crew of the Jennie. The barges were from Southern ports.

STOP SHIP TO STEADY KNIFE  
Lay-to in Mid-Ocean While Surgeon  
Performed Operation.

NEW YORK, December 30.—When Christmas Eve festivities were at their height on board the steamer Pannonia, just in from Mediterranean ports, the ship was brought to a stop in mid-ocean that the ship's surgeon might have the most favorable conditions under which to perform an operation for appendicitis. The steamer lay to for one hour, while the doctor cutting and stitching was done. The patient, a man passenger, is recovering.

FRIENDS KILL EACH OTHER  
Quarrel Over Family Matter and Each  
Kills the Other.

HARTSFELLS, ALA., December 30.—Mearse details have just reached here of a double tragedy at Bluff City, on the Tennessee River, yesterday, in which Rube Wastor and Sam McClure shot and killed each other. The men had been good friends, but one of them is said to have objected to attentions which the other was paying to his sister.

## ACCLAIM TAFT AS "NEXT PRESIDENT"

Secretary of War Defends  
President and Endorses  
His Policies.

## HE IS ACCORDED FINE RECEPTION

In Address to Merchants' Associa-  
tion Presidential Aspirant  
Reiterates the Well-Known  
Views of His Chief on  
Public Questions and  
Indorses Them.

BOSTON, December 30.—Greeted with cheers as "the next President of the United States," a topic which he successfully avoided in his own remarks, however, Secretary of War William H. Taft delivered his first public speech since his world-circling tour to-night at the annual banquet of the Boston Merchants' Association at the Hotel Somerset. The banquet closed a long and strenuous day for the Secretary of War, during which he delivered a brief address before 400 ministers in the morning, and attended a reception and spoke before a large gathering of the Jews of the City at the Ellysium Club in the afternoon. During his visit to Boston, which ends to-morrow morning, Secretary Taft is the guest of Samuel Carr, a Boston banker and a relative of Mrs. Taft.

A more notable gathering of prominent and representative business men has seldom been seen in Boston than that which greeted the Secretary to-night. In the banquet hall beautiful decorations adorned the tables, which were provided for the seating of 500 guests. President Jerome Jones, of the Boston Merchants' Association, presided. The guests included, besides the Secretary of War, Congressman Sherley of Kentucky, Idahoan Governor Elmer F. Draper, of Massachusetts, Mayor John F. Fitzgerald, and the Rev. William Lawrence, Bishop of Massachusetts.

In introducing Secretary Taft President Jones said: "We are favored this evening by the presence of a man from the Middle West, who has impressed us all with his fitness for the most important position a great and powerful nation can bestow, and in brief, an official of great strength and wisdom. He recently put the girls and the earth as an ambassador of peace and good will, by visiting the great rulers of mighty nations, and we want to hear him talk to us."

Given Great Ovation.  
As Mr. Taft rose all the guests stood up with him and filled the air with long continued cheers. Secretary Taft then made a speech of welcome, and throughout, making no comment relative to his own candidacy for the presidency. Mr. Taft's speech was in the main a broad defense of President Roosevelt's policy, and a dealing with the trusts and with the recent financial crisis. Those responsible for the panic, he said, were the "guilty managers" of some of the large railroads and financial enterprises, and not those who, in the course of their official duty, have made known to the business world the facts and commented on them. He denied that the administration had arranged the whole business of the country, and that the President had condemned the law-breakers and convinced those who had unlawfully accumulated enormous power and capital that they were not upon the verge of ruin.

The President, he declared, had never said otherwise than that the business men of the country, as a whole, were honest and their methods sound.

"Indeed," said Mr. Taft, "it is chiefly in the interest of the great body of honest business men that I have made my great fight for lawful business methods." That the railroad rate law was responsible for the financial panic, Mr. Taft characterized as absurd, and as the linkage in the value of railroad stocks